



Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse

Progress Report for Fourth Quarter, FY 2004
July - September 2004

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The Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse

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ACRONYMS

BIOFOR	Biodiversity and Sustainable Forestry
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
EGAT	Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (EGAT) Bureau
FY	fiscal year
GAO	General Accounting Office
GIS	geographic information systems
NRIC	Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse
NRM	natural resources management
OPIN	Online Presidential Initiative Network
PAICO	Office of Program Analysis, Implementation, Communications and Outreach
TFCA	Tropical Forest Conservation Act
URI/CRC	University of Rhode Island/Coastal Resources Center
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

SUMMARY

This document serves as the Natural Resources Information Clearinghouse's (NRIC) progress report for the eighth quarter of operation (July through September 2004). Following this summary of accomplishments, the report presents a narrative discussion of the project's accomplishments and the quarterly financial report.

Key accomplishments in this reporting period included: 1) the Section 119: Biodiversity Conservation Report was produced; 2) the NRM Office framework strategy was developed; 3) a concept paper on sustainable tourism was drafted; and 4) meetings with domestic and regional stakeholders, and visits to select countries in the Amazon Basin made significant progress in developing an opportunities assessment for biodiversity conservation in the Amazon Basin.

Specific accomplishments included:

Reports, publications, and research

- Produced Section 119: Biodiversity Conservation Report, FY 2003
- Updated the Water for the Poor Fact Sheet (August 2004 Update) for State Dept web site
- Prepared the Water for the Poor Progress Report (FY 2003-2004) for Congressional Research Services
- Completed GAO Questionnaire (Part II) on Freshwater Infrastructure Investments
- Conducted review of Africa Water Projects for Coca-Cola Partnership
- Provided OPIN Mid-Year Report, FY 2004
- Prepared FY 2003, 2004, and 2005 data
- Conducted research on Water for the Poor funds leveraged
- Analyzed data on drinking water earmark allocations by fund account
- FY 2005 Total Water Obligations – gathered data and prepared preliminary report
- Researched and prepared an overview of watershed management indicators for RCSA, Guinea
- Participated in the URI/CRC Women in Leadership & Development Workshop developing cases and Lessons Learned for Mainstreaming Gender in ICM;

Web

- For www.usaid.gov, created 7 new pages and 4 modules, and posted two 508-compliant Congressional Reports: Section 118: Tropical Forests Report and USAID's Investment in Drinking Water Supply. Also updated and modified 4 modules and 3 pages.
- For EGAT Intranet, submitted 23 pages and 13 modules, including 10 Users Guide pages.
- On www.nric.net, produced 11 new pages on the joint-sponsored Poverty Reduction and Natural Resources Management seminar series
- "What's New" module updated with a Water for the Poor data table as status report at request of EGAT/DAA Jackee Schafer

Build Information Resources

- Added 21 project records, 229 documents and four images to the NRM databases, and completed data entry for the Asia and the Near East and Europe and Eurasia regions.
- Continued data entry on tourism in USAID projects.

- Completed initial review of USAID projects using GIS technology
- Drafted land resources resource inventory

Planning

- Facilitated the development of a new strategic framework for the NRM Office, and wrote the draft.
- Began assessment of USAID's and other donors' conservation activities in the Amazon Basin region through visits to select Missions and partners.

Conference, training, and communications support

- Completed Phase I of sustainable tourism initiative and began work on World Tourism Organization conference presentations in October;
- Drafted materials for the seminar series on Poverty Reduction and Natural Resources Management, coordinated registration, helped arrange for speakers, and designed/posted web pages that included a digital registration form, seminar outlines and readings, and speaker information.

Additions to the Work Plan

The following activities were initiated this quarter but not specifically planned for in NRIC's FY 2004 Work Plan:

- Input to Forestry Team's research and design and translation of forestry trade network survey
- Update of Water for the Poor on funds leveraged to date

Next quarter

In the first quarter of FY05, NRIC will focus on 8 major activities:

1. preparing **materials for Water Team**, including case summaries and a summary of estimated FY 2005 water-related obligations
2. supporting NRM input to the **performance and accountability report**
3. adding information to a new **geospatial** component of the online databases
4. continuing the Opportunities Assessment initiative for the **Amazon Basin**
5. continuing **sustainable tourism** activities, including assisting with preparation of presentation for UN-World Tourism Organization forum in October, portfolio assessment, development of case studies and presentation material, development of web site.
6. Continued assistance with planning and implementation of **poverty reduction seminar series**.
7. Development of **Supplemental Poverty Reduction Seminar** pages for the www.nric.net.
8. Post **TFCA web pages** on www.usaid.gov.

TASK 1. RESEARCH, WRITE, AND PRODUCE REPORTS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Under Task 1 NRIC assists the NRM Office and teams with research, writing reports, case studies and other informative documents, and production of these materials.

This quarter, NRIC helped the NRM Office prepare and print the *FY 2003 Section 119: Biodiversity Conservation Report*, and disseminate the Sections 118 and 119 Reports to USAID Missions and partners.

NRIC assisted the Forestry Team with a survey of members of WWF's Global Forest and Trade Network. Survey results will be used as part of a research paper to be presented at an academic conference. NRIC worked with the team to draft questions and format it as both digital and print copy, as well as facilitate the translation of the survey (digital and print versions) into Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese. Finally, NRIC helped prepare the Forestry Team prepare a second questionnaire, aimed at WWF's Forest and Trade Network Managers.

This quarter, the GIS portfolio assessment began. NRIC hired three GIS and geospatial team members, who reviewed GIS use by USAID Missions and projects. The team contacted Mission staff in Africa, Asia and the Near East, Europe and Eurasia, and Latin America and the Caribbean for information about the Missions' current and planned use of GIS in their programs. Domestic partner organizations were also contacted. Finally, NRIC began development of database of GIS use for the regions where USAID works.

Other NRIC research and reporting in the fourth quarter included the following:

- FY 2005 Congressional Water Report mailed to Missions;
- Water for the Poor – prepared update on funds leveraged, prepared progress report (FY 2003-2005) for Congressional Research Services, and updated fact sheet for State Department web site;
- FY 2004 Drinking Water Earmark – prepared a report on allocations by fund account;
- FY 2005 Water Obligations – gathered data and prepared preliminary report;
- Provided OPIN Mid-Year Report (FY 2004) and prepared water data for end of year report;
- Completed GAO questionnaire (part II) on Freshwater Infrastructure Investments;
- Conducted review of Africa Water Projects for Coca-Cola Partnership;
- Researched and prepared a report on wetlands activities;
- Researched and prepared an overview of watershed management indicators for RCSA, Guinea;
- Participated in the URI/CRC Women in Leadership and Development Workshop Developing Cases and Lessons Learned for Mainstreaming Gender in ICM;
- Helped the Biodiversity and Forestry teams write three news articles for posting on EGAT's Intranet "What's New" section: 1) Presentation by Forestry Team member at watershed capacity building conference, 2) announcement of USAID's FY 2003 Section 118: Tropical Forests Report, 3) announcement of USAID's FY 2003 Section 119: Biodiversity Conservation Report;

- Land Tenure Resources Inventory developed – including web, agency and bibliographic information. Supplemental land tenure bibliography formatted.

TASK 2. COLLECT AND MANAGE INFORMATION FOR THE NRM OFFICE AND TEAMS

Under Task 2 NRIC collects data on NRM-related activities and expenditures Agency-wide, tracks field support provided by the NRM Office, and provides analysis and reporting based on these data.

NRIC technical specialists tracked the Forestry and Water Teams' member activities, including support provided to Missions and other Bureaus within USAID, conferences attended and other important accomplishments.

NRIC updated Water Team field support tracking and submitted the data to PAICO. NRIC also collected data for OPIN and submitted a summary for USAID-Dept. of State joint meetings.

TASK 3. DESIGN, PRODUCE, AND MAINTAIN WEB SITES

Under Task 3 NRIC designs, produces and maintain web pages for the NRM Office and teams.

NRIC continued to support the NRM Office's Web presence in the fourth quarter, involving three Web sites: EGAT's internal site, and public sites at www.usaid.gov, and www.nric.net. For the EGAT Intranet, a total of 13 pages and 13 modules were updated for the NRM Office's pages and 10 Users Guide pages were completed and approved. For USAID's public site, 7 pages and 4 modules were created, and 4 pages and 3 modules were updated, along with the posting of 2 Congressional Reports (Drinking Water and Tropical Forests). Additionally, www.nric.net was expanded with 11 new pages focusing on the Poverty Reduction/NRM seminar series. More information about these updates and changes are provided in the following paragraphs.

This quarter, 13 pages and 13 modules for the NRM Office's web pages on the EGAT Intranet were updated and expanded. Of these, 5 pages and 12 modules about the NRM Office and Teams were updated, approved, and posted, as well as the NRM Office staff directory (8 pages and 1 module). Moreover, 10 pages (focusing on 4 mechanisms) of the Users Guide were completed, approved, and submitted for posting.

NRIC helped the NRM Office make numerous updates to its pages on www.usaid.gov. Specifically, the following pages and modules were updated and posted:

- "What's New" module & "Reports to Congress"
- Forestry 118 Report
- Water Congressional Report
- Biodiversity policy pages (6)
- "What's New" module updated with WfP case study at request of EGAT/DAA Jackee Schafer
- Forestry Partners page
- "What We Do" module for Land Resources Management

In addition, a new USAID Pubs page and “What’s New” module, 508-compliant version of FY03 119 Rpt, modified Pubs module and main lobby page were submitted to LPA for posting on www.usaid.gov. Finally, TFCA pages revised and submitted to State Dept. for approval

The web site www.nric.net has been used solely as the site for the NRM online library. This quarter, its use was expanded to include pages devoted to the new Poverty Reduction and Natural Resources Management seminar series. Jointly sponsored by EGAT’s Office of Natural Resources Management and Office of Poverty Reduction, the seminars will occur between October 2004 and March 2005. The seminar pages include a description of the series and individual seminars, a schedule, a registration form, a reading list, and biographical information on speakers. The registration form is a Microsoft Word document that participants can complete on screen and email back to the conference facilitators. While creating the web pages, NRIC designed a unique masthead for all the pages to visually separate the seminar series from the NRM online library. A total of 11 pages have been written, approved by both EGAT offices, and posted.

TASK 4. ACQUIRE, ORGANIZE, AND ARCHIVE INFORMATION RESOURCES

Under Task 4 NRIC is compiling information about USAID natural resources projects and related cross-sectoral activities, and helping distributing the information, lesson learned and tools over the Internet, in workshops and as training materials.

In the fourth quarter, NRIC completed the entry of baseline records for Europe and Eurasia. The database now includes records for USAID projects active anytime from 2000 through 2003 (and some more recent) and links to associated documents available from DEC for NRM projects in Africa, and Asia & Near East, Europe and Eurasia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as projects under global contracts with significant NRM components. The projects component of the database was increased by 21 projects, which brings the total number of projects in the database to 488. Moreover, 229 documents were added to the NRIC library, bringing the total holdings to 3,032 documents. The images component of the database grew to 378, with four images added this quarter.

In addition, NRIC:

- Updated and added information to projects database for tourism and Mexico;
- Drafted land resources resource inventory (bibliography & web) and submitted for review;
- Reviewed USAID projects in Amazon to prepare for Amazon Basin Initiative;
- Completed preliminary review of USAID projects using GIS technology; and
- Completed NRIC Operations Manual.

TASK 5. PLANNING

Under Task 5 NRIC supports planning meetings and activities within the NRM Office and teams.

In the fourth quarter, NRIC helped the NRM Office develop a new strategic framework. A senior consultant led the strategic planning activity, with support from NRIC's Water Resources Technical Advisor, Biodiversity & Forestry Specialist, Land and Water Specialist, and another consultant (perhaps we should give him a title like "meeting facilitator" – ask Richard). The team conducted interviews and gathered information from a variety of sources, including NRM Office staff; staff from other EGAT offices, USAID's regional bureaus, and Missions; and other partners. The strategic planning team prepared an interim report for the NRM Office, which included analyses and decision-making guidance for the Office vision, a new strategic objective and framework, and related indicators. A final strategy report, which includes a strategic objective, four intermediate results, and next steps, was completed and submitted to the NRM Office at the end of the quarter.

This quarter, NRIC also helped the NRM Office's Biodiversity Team and the Latin America and the Caribbean Bureau by undertaking an opportunities assessment for the Amazon Basin. To assess USAID and other donor activities in the region, and identify strategic opportunities for USAID in the region, NRIC hired two short-term experts, including the Amazon Basin Team Leader, and completed the work plan. In September, three NRIC staff members joined the team to visit Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia to meet with USAID mission staff, partners and other donors. The team will visit Brazil in October. Based on the outcomes of these visits, the team will produce an opportunities assessment for the NRM Office and the LAC Bureau, with the eventual goal of helping USAID write an "Amazon Conservation Strategy." The opportunities assessment is expected to be completed in December 2004.

TASK 6. ASSISTING WITH CONFERENCES, TRAINING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Under task 6 NRIC prepares materials and provides logistic support for conferences, meetings, workshops and training activities, and supports communications and outreach needs of the NRM Office and teams.

In the fourth quarter, the sustainable tourism initiative began in earnest. NRIC hired a sustainable tourism expert and support staff. The initiative has three phases: 1) research and reports about USAID's work in sustainable tourism, leading to a concept paper; 2) preparation of detailed case studies, presentations at the World Tourism Organization conference, and web page development for USAID's internal web site; and 3) development of training modules and manual, and completion of case studies. This quarter, the Phase I concept report was completed, and the Phase II work plan was drafted. Research continued as work on the case studies (in Bulgaria, Croatia, Egypt, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, Mozambique, Namibia, Romania, and Tanzania) and preparation of materials for the October conference was started.

To support the NRM Office in its joint endeavor with EGAT's Office of Poverty Reduction to hold seminars on poverty reduction and natural resources management, NRIC drafted seminar materials for review, helped arrange for speakers, and designed web pages about the seminar series that included a digital registration form. The web pages are hosted on www.nric.net.

NRIC assisted the NRM office with its marketing and dissemination efforts, with two news articles on the availability of the FY 2003 Section 118: Tropical Forests Report, and a Forestry Team member's participation as keynote speaker at an international watershed workshop. In addition, NRIC drafted an Action Plan and next steps for NRM communication strategy, and helped with mailing of the Section 118: Tropical Forests and Section 119: Biodiversity Conservation reports to Missions.

NRIC updated and printed materials and assembled display materials for the September US Coral Reef Task Force meeting in Florida (meeting postponed to December due to hurricanes).

TASK 7. NRIC PROJECT PLANNING, MONITORING, AND REPORTING

This report details the NRIC products and activities for last quarter, July – September 2004, and briefly outlines the work plan for the current quarter. See the section “Changes to the NRIC Annual Work Plan” for specific changes to the NRIC work plan.

This quarter NRIC submitted its FY 2005 workplan and budget to USAID for review. The NRIC Director and technical specialists continued to participate in the regularly scheduled meetings of the NRM Office and Teams.

CHANGES TO NRIC AND THE NRIC ANNUAL WORK PLAN

This section identifies changes made to the NRIC Annual Work Plan during the previous quarter, discusses reasons for these changes and impacts on operations.

In the fourth quarter FY 2004, NRIC used 174 days of level-of-effort in short-term technical assistance (19.5 for junior-level assistance, 93 for mid-level, and 61.5 for senior-level) for collecting and accessioning baseline data on NRM projects and tourism-specific data for the online databases, and for work related to five new activities: assess USAID's GIS & geospatial portfolio; assist the NRM Office to develop a new strategic framework; assess opportunities for USAID conservation programs in the Amazon Basin; assess USAID's tourism portfolio and provide tools to support tourism projects; and support a series of seminars on the links between poverty reduction and NRM.

Also added to the work plan this quarter, NRIC helped the Forestry Team conduct research through assisting with the drafting, formatting, and translating of a questionnaire for members and managers of WWF's forest trade network. NRIC also updated Water for the Poor on funds leveraged to date.

FINANCIAL REPORT

This information has been deliberately omitted from this version.